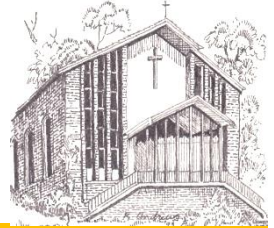




Welcome to the Parish of St Michael Thirroul and Wombarra



27 / 28 APRIL 2019

2ND SUNDAY OF THE 50 DAYS OF EASTER ✦ YEAR C

Thank You to those who helped over Easter

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

A Leap of Faith

Were you at the Easter Vigil? Incomparable, remember?

A single, tiny light inched its way up the pitch-black aisle. It spread, all at once, absurdly, into more and more glowing dots, now evenly spaced throughout the pews. A glowing, humble enchantment.

The light of Christ.

Now, one week later, in the Gospel, we find “doubting Thomas.” “Show me the nail marks in his hands, let me put my finger into his side and then I will believe.” Was he laying down conditions for faith? Let us look.

Thomas and the other disciples were not yet exemplars of faith. Huddled in a tiny room with doors locked double tight for fear of the authorities, holding their distress close, with self-protection and doubt.

Maybe that is why, in each of the New Testament accounts, Jesus appears first to women, not to men. In each case the women believed. Usually he then sent the women to the males, who in their case did not get it, at least not wholly.

Peter and John actually did run to the empty tomb, and Peter went inside. “They did not yet understand the scripture that he had to rise from the dead,” it says in John 20:9, except that John did, but they went home.


Mary Magdalene was outside. In a heart-burst she knew her beloved. Christ told her not to hang on but to go to his brothers and explain the good news. She did.

Let me tell you a story.

I once knew a man whose doubts were based in deep fear. For a long time, he nearly drowned in fear and doubt. He knew, in his mind anyway, that the Holy Spirit was never absent. But in his soul, he was walking the edge of the void.

Karl Rahner has said somewhere that when you come to the void there is no proof either way. There can be no certainty as to whether the void is absolute emptiness or whether it is the sheer openness of love. You have to make a choice.

This man's dear, impoverished self had known only empty echoes for such a long time, but suddenly he remembered Rahner's dictum. Through grace and circumstance and through being loved, he saw that a choice was possible for him. Not a bravado choice, not even a very clear one, but still a choice.

So he asked himself what, at that level, he did believe. Did he think that his own deep emptiness could produce all the foundations of the universe, the heart of the world, 



of everyone and everything he had ever known and loved?

Or did he see that imperceptible love was nestling gently throughout every particle that exists? Was there a speck of dawning light, or was gloom the final word?

He told me that his choice was surprisingly simple.

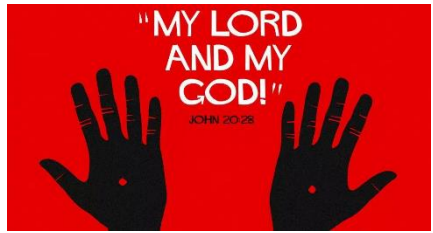
It was taken in the absence of any proof, since proofs emerge from choice. His choosing was quiet, like still, small spring rain, in spite of his immersion in darkness. He chose light, which is love, which is “like gold to airy thinness beat.” He made a leap of faith.

In the present day, this man I knew repeats what doubting Thomas will finally say this Sunday. I hope you will be saying it too.

“My Lord and my God.”

Our Easter celebration has once again come and gone. Participation in the liturgy has probably been a deeply moving and inspiring experience for many. But now life goes on as before, in a world that does not seem to have been changed. The words of the Preface, ‘The joy of the resurrection renews the whole world’, don’t seem to ring true. As this mood overtakes us, let us recall that the apostles themselves did not find it easy to come to terms with what the Saviour’s victory over death meant for them. They had looked forward to sharing with Jesus in his messianic triumph, but now their world seemed to go on as before. It is remarkable that all four gospels tell of the ‘doubts’ and ‘hesitations’ of the apostles as they came to faith in the Lord’s Resurrection. In today’s gospel reading from John these doubts are expressed by Thomas – the stolid realist who objected at the Supper, ‘We don’t know where you are going; how can we know the way?’. Perhaps we shall find the way forward in the faith journey of this Easter season if we reflect upon Jesus’ greeting of ‘Peace’, used twice when he came among the disciples on the evening of his resurrection day, and repeated when he returned to confirm the faith of doubting Thomas. As we look out on today’s world, thoughts of the ‘peace’ the world yearns for are often in our minds. Many times we have been told that we can only be peacemakers if we are at peace in ourselves; and we know from the times we have experienced true peace, that peace is more than the absence of conflict – it is a positive coming together of all that matters in our lives.

Ultimately, the Risen Lord’s gift to the world is the gift of true peace. So, in his first meeting with his disciples he points out the way that leads to the peace he will give to the human family – ‘a peace the world cannot give, that is my gift to you’ he had told them in John’s account of the Supper. The peace Christ brings is found through faith, a faith that is alive to God’s active presence in the world in Christ, and is open to learning that God’s ways challenge our expectations. ‘Happy (blessed with true peace) are those who have not seen and yet believe’. Through the gift of faith, we see beneath the surface of the lives we live and the events unfolding in our world, to accept the ‘Lord and God’ whose self-giving – forever displayed in the wounds of his risen body – invites us to trust that, in the end, beyond all our expectations, the whole of creation will be gathered into his peace. He announced the forgiveness of sins. Perhaps we balk at the theme of ‘sin’ featuring so prominently in this first encounter. ‘Sin’ is not a fashionable notion today: our ‘liberated’ culture finds it hard to accept the obvious fact that most of the problems of humanity are caused by the selfish abuse of freedom. It was the world’s selfishness that caused his wounds; only his triumph will bring healing the world needs. Though a new life-force is at work – ‘Receive the Holy Spirit’ – the world seems to go on as before. Things are not put right all at once, because God respects our human freedom, and calls us to play our part in the final glorious outcome: ‘As the Father has sent me, so am I sending you’.





THANK YOU!!

To the many parishioners who helped preparing for the Easter Liturgies, and to those who were involved in the Liturgies in so very many ways – a **huge** thank you! Your ministry helped people appreciate the beauty and wonder of the Easter Triduum. Thank you so very much!

PROJECT COMPASSION

Thank you for supporting Caritas Australia's Project Compassion 2019 Lenten appeal. ☎ 1800 024 413 Please return all Project Compassion envelopes and boxes ASAP.



EASTER LASTS FOR FIFTY DAYS

Easter for Christians is not just one day, but rather a 50-day period. The season of Easter, or Eastertide, begins at sunset on the eve of Easter and ends on Pentecost, the day we celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit and the birth of the Church (see Acts 2). Easter is also more than just an extended celebration of the resurrection of Jesus. In the early Church, Lent was a season for new converts to learn about the faith and prepare for baptism on Easter Sunday. The initial purpose of the 50-day Easter season was to continue the faith formation of new Christians. The Easter season gives us time to rejoice and experience what it means when we say Christ is risen. It's the season when we remember our baptisms and how through this sacrament we are incorporated into Christ's mighty acts of salvation. As "Easter people," we also celebrate and ponder the birth of the Church and gifts of the Spirit (Pentecost), and how we are to live as faithful disciples of Christ. So Easter lasts **seven weeks of seven days, plus one more day**. In the Scriptures, **seven** is the number of completeness and perfection (both physical and spiritual). *Complete completeness and more.*

SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

The Sacrament of Confirmation will be conferred by Bishop Brian on **Wednesday and Thursday, 26/27 June 2019** to Year 6 (or older) students. **Enrolment Forms** may be downloaded **from our Parish website**. Download and complete the Form, then return it to the Parish Office: thirroul@dow.org.au Enrolments close on **Monday, 13 May 2019**.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

"The strengthening of fraternity, generated in the human family by the worship of God in spirit and truth, is the new frontier of Christianity. Every detail of the life of the body and of the soul, in which the love and redemptive power of the new creation shine forth within us, leads to amazement before the miracle of a resurrection in the very process of occurring (cf. Colossians 3:1-2)."

– Pope Francis, *Humana Communitas*, 6 January 2019

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK AND BEYOND

Monday 29 Apr 9:00am School Resumes for Term 2
 Tuesday 30 Apr 9:30am ANZAC Day School Service *McCarthy Centre*
 Friday 3 May 9:30am Anointing of the Sick
 Monday 13 May 6:00pm Enrolments for Confirmation 2019 close



**ONE NON-PERISHABLE ITEM PER FAMILY EACH WEEK
 TO HELP THE NEEDY IN THE LOCAL ILLAWARRA AREA**

5,385 rescues performed since 1 July 18 – last week **5,087**

SWIM SAFELY – BETWEEN THE FLAGS WHERE THE WAVES BREAK



THE END OF THE SURFING SEASON

Sunday marks the end of the surfing season, after which North Wollongong will be the only patrolled beach. The water temperature is still 21°C, so people will still go in the surf to enjoy a relaxing swim. If you do go for a swim in the surf when there are no flags: **do so only if you are a good swimmer; and swim close to the shore; and swim only where the waves are breaking** – if the waves are not breaking, there's most likely a rip there.



Thirroul Surf Club ~1940 ↗

ACTS OF APOSTLES

All during the 50 days of Easter we read from Luke's **Acts of the Apostles**: we hear of the struggles of the early Church and the missionary journeys of St Paul. *Great, inspiring reading!*

THIS Sunday's Readings *on our website*

Second Sunday of Easter • Year **C**
 1st Reading Acts 5:12-16
 2nd Reading Revelation 1:9-13,17-19
 Gospel John 20:19-31

NEXT Sunday's Readings *on our website*

Third Sunday of Easter • Year **C**
 1st Reading Acts 5:27-32,40-41
 2nd Reading Revelation 5:11-14
 Gospel John 21:1-19

SUNDAY MASS TIMES

Church of St Michael • Thirroul
 Saturday – 5:30pm • Sunday – 8:00am
 Bulli • Sunday 8:30am and 5:30pm
 Corrimal • Saturday 6pm, Sunday 9:30am

LITURGIES THIS WEEK

Wombarra [*Liturgy*] Monday 4:30pm
 Thirroul Tuesday 5:30pm
 Wednesday 9:00am
 Thursday 9:00am
Anointing of the Sick Friday 9:30am

Parish of St Michael – Thirroul and Wombarra

Moving forward as a Parish Family + one of the Northern Illawarra Parishes

Patrick Vaughan • *Parish Priest* ❖ Andrew Granc ofm, Geoff Allen, Ken Cafe ofm • *Assisting*

📍 325 Lawrence Hargrave Drive
 ☎ 4268 1910 📠 4268 1976

📧 PO Box 44 • Thirroul 2515

📧 thirroul@dow.org.au

Parish Office Hours Tuesday, Wednesday Friday

9:00am to 3:30pm Magda Pires
 10:00am to 3:00pm Maureen Franciskovic

🌐 www.thirroulcatholic.org.au Parish School of St Michael ☎ 4267 2560